

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An automatic sampler for injecting a sample into a sample introducing portion in communication to a column of a liquid chromatography, comprising:

a) a needle for sucking the sample from a sample liquid bath and injecting the sample into the sample introducing portion;

b) a first rinsing section for rinsing said needle by soaking said needle in a first rinsing liquid in a first rinsing bath, in which the first rinsing liquid in said first rinsing bath is not exchanged during the rinsing operation; and

c) a second rinsing section for rinsing said needle by soaking said needle in a second rinsing liquid in a second rinsing bath, in which the second rinsing liquid in said second rinsing bath is exchanged during the rinsing operation,

wherein said needle is rinsed by at least one rinsing section selected from said first rinsing section and said second rinsing section.

2. (Original) The automatic sampler according to claim 1, further comprising:
a switching section for selecting the second rinsing liquid for use with said second rinsing section from among a plurality of rinsing liquids.

3. (Withdrawn) A method for rinsing a needle of an automatic sampler, said method comprising:

rinsing the needle by at least one operation selected from a) rinsing the needle by soaking the needle in a first rinsing liquid, in which the first rinsing liquid is not exchanged during the rinsing operation, and b) rinsing the needle by soaking the needle in a second rinsing liquid, in which the second rinsing liquid is exchanged during the rinsing operation.

4. (Withdrawn) The method for rinsing a needle of an automatic sampler according to claim 3, further comprising:

selecting the second rinsing liquid from among a plurality of rinsing liquids.

5. (New) The automatic sampler according to claim 1, further comprising:
a pump fluidly connected to the second liquid bath, wherein said pump is adapted to supply the second rinsing liquid to the second rinsing bath so as to exchange the second rinsing liquid in the second liquid bath.